

G. C. Atkinson; some of which memoirs have already appeared in our pages. There is, moreover, a series of papers composing the Dredging-Report of 1863, containing much important matter. We think, however, that it would be well for the editor of the report to adopt for the future greater uniformity in tabulating the results of the dredgings. Each list, for example, ought to be drawn up after the same plan, with the same system of nomenclature throughout, so far as concerns locality and depth. As it is, very little information at all is given respecting the depth of the different dredgings, or the nature of the ground, both of which are points of great importance in the distribution of species. Regarding the localities where the dredging-operations took place, each author seems to have adopted a nomenclature of his own: thus one set of dredgings is referred to, by the different authors of the report, as having taken place "off Berwick," "off Holy Island," and in "Berwick Bay;" and we suspect that "the Durham coast" and "off Seaham" both refer to the same locality though they appear to refer to different places. All this is very confusing, and may lead to the report being misunderstood. When the next Dredging-Report appears, we should be glad to see the different dredging-papers drawn up after the method of Edward Forbes and M'Andrew, with the locality, depth, nature of ground, distance from shore, quantity of individuals of each species, and whether dead or living, and condition, all clearly stated for every dredging. At the same time we trust that some explanation will be given of the signs used in the lists; for at present who except the authors can have the slightest idea of what is expressed by the letters *c.*, *r.*, *r.c.*, *v.*, &c.?

Notwithstanding these and the preceding strictures which we have deemed it our duty to make in noticing this Part of the Tyneside Transactions, we must say, in conclusion, as we said or implied at the beginning, that there is far more in it to admire than to disapprove.

The Physical Geology and Geography of Great Britain: Six Lectures to Working Men, delivered in the Royal School of Mines in 1863. By Prof. A. C. RAMSAY, F.R.S. &c. Second edition, pp. 199. London: E. Stanford. 1864.

The success of this little book has confirmed an impression we have long been under, that one of the most paying works a competent geologist could undertake is a new edition of Conybeare and Phillips's 'Geology of England and Wales.' Students of geology would accept it as a guide, and professed geologists would use it as a text-book, while professors and lecturers would recommend it as both.

These Lectures were not published with any such ambitious design: they were delivered to an audience of working men, at a nominal fee of sixpence for the course, in the Museum of Practical Geology; and the first edition of them was printed last year from the notes of a short-hand writer. Prof. Ramsay remarks, in his

preface to this edition, that the former contained many imperfections and mistakes, but that in this the whole work has been corrected, revised, and in parts almost re-written. This confession has probably been made in deference to the strictures of a few captious critics, who cannot understand, or are unable to tolerate, good honest Anglo-Saxon (a little *too* honest, it may be, at times), perfectly suited to the bricklayers, carpenters, and blacksmiths for whom it was intended. But it appears to us that one of the most valuable (because one of the most rare) gifts which Prof. Ramsay possesses is that of being able, with perfect ease and apparently without effort, to adapt himself so well to the calibre of his audience. He is thus equally at home, though acting so differently, as President of the Geological Society and as a teacher of geology to working men.

The principal addition made to the book in this edition is a little coloured geological map of Great Britain, done wonderfully well, considering the scale, and extremely useful as a help to the unlearned in their attempts to understand the subjects treated of. Professor Ramsay's plan of instruction in this case is to associate the peculiarities of the geological structure of the country with those of its surface-configuration; and thus he is enabled to impress more vividly on the mind the salient features of the one subject, and to explain more easily the causes of the phenomena included in the other. Nothing could be more simple, or better adapted to the audience, than this plan of procedure; and the exhaustion of the first edition of these Lectures in less than a twelvemonth shows that nothing could be more acceptable, or better understood, by the public at large.

PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Jan. 26, 1864.—E. W. H. Holdsworth, Esq., F.Z.S., in the Chair.

NOTES ON SEALS (PHOCIDÆ), INCLUDING THE DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SEAL (*HALICYON RICHARDII*) FROM THE WEST COAST OF NORTH AMERICA. BY DR. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S.

Mr. Charles B. Wood, the Surgeon of H.M.S. 'Hecate,' has very kindly sent to the British Museum, along with other interesting specimens from the north-western part of North America, the skeleton of a Seal from Fraser's River, and the skull of a Seal obtained on the west coast of Vancouver's Island.

The skull was procured from the natives, who had the animal towed along the side of their canoe. They refused to part with the entire animal, but were at length induced to sell the head.

The examination of the skulls shows that the two Seals evidently belong to the same species, the specimen from Fraser's River being adult, and the other not quite so old. Mr. Wood observes that "the younger Seal was captured among the islands in Queen Charlotte's Sound, at the north end of Vancouver; has a fur of a dark brown,